--. CORNELIUS KREIGHOFF --.

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To continue with our talks on Canadian Art. After discussing Paul Kane and his work in the North West, we come to a rather similar figure, who also gives us a picture of the early days in Canada, in another section of the country, the Province of Quebec.

Just about the time that Paul Kane was making his difficult journey across Canada, another daring spirit stepped off the boat on the wharf at New York, CORNELIUS KREIGHOFF, a charming young German, who at the age of 22, set out to seek his fortune in a new land, with a violin under one arm and a paint-box under the other.

Cornelius Kreighoff was the eldest son of John Kreighoff, a manufacturer of wall-paper, at Dusseldorf, in Saxony, where Cornelius was born in 1812, two years after Paul Kane. His mother was a Hollander. He spent his boyhood in Mainburg Castle, in Bavaria, and was given a liberal education. He was trained to be a professional musician and became an accomplished performer upon a number of instruments. He also studied painting. He spent several years travelling through the various countries of Europe, playing wherever he could get an engagement and painting whenever he could find a purchaser.

His nomadic spirit soon reached out for more experience, and so as the new world offered advantages and opportunities, we see him landing in New York, with little money but with a brave heart, - to become a wandering musician and a collector of rare plants for a German university.

Shortly after his arrival the Seminole War broke out in Florida.

He enlisted in the American Army and was given the rank of Sergeant. His object was to see something of Florida and he was determined to make an exhaustive series of sketches illustrating every phase of the War. He made several hundred drawings and the United States Government commissioned him to make a large number of paintings for the War Department Archives.

Kreighoff was in the Army for three years, was discharged in 1840, immediately re-enlisted, but deserted the same day to marry a French Canadian girl, Louise Gauthier, - and so culminated a romance which had started soon after he came to the country.

It was fortunate, indeed, for us that the charms of this young, dark-eyed French Canadian girl captured the chivalrous Kreighoff, took him out of the Army and brought him back to make him a painter of her own country.

The records are uncertain as to the direct course taken by the young couple. In the four years following 1840, he is supposed to have executed the paintings commissioned by the American Government, the original sketches of which became the property of John Budden, of Quebec, and were destroyed in the great fire of 1881. He is also supposed to have opened a studio in Rochester, N.Y., where he spent several years. Later he moved to Toronto where his brother, Ernest, was living, and again opened a studio. The record of that period of his life is rather uncertain, but it is believed that while there he met Paul Kane.

We do know, however, that finally he appeared at Longueuil, in the middle Forties with his wife and a small daughter, Emily, and so Louise was reunited with her family. The Gauthiers who were very kind

and hospitable received them with joy, and Kreighoff, the man of the world, soon fell under the spell of these simple and wholesome people. They reminded him of the country folk he had known in Germany and Holland, and he soon became the favourite of the community. His ready wit and kindly humour made him the centre of their merry parties.

A picture of those early days has been given to us by the artist's sensitive brush. He shows the cozy little houses of French Canada, with their bell roofs, the snow in deep drifts around the door, the wintry skies of greys and blues hang over the snowy country-side, the little pointed fir-trees with snow powdered on their frilly branches stand in spots of green against the low blue hills. The landscape is but a setting for the life of the habitant, which is portrayed vividly and faithfully. Perhaps the family are setting out to make that long drive across the ice road, to Montreal. The little red Burleau is at the front door. Old Dobbin is patiently waiting while the family pile in; mon pere, in his cream blanket coat with red epaulets, and the capuchon, ready to be pulled up should the wind prove to be too bitter. He waves his red-mittened hand with the whip in it, to hurry the family on. Madame is already tucked in, well rolled up in furs and holding two of the children with clouds around their heads. They are waiting for a pretty young woman in a fur bonnet and bright home-spun cape, with a little girl of four in a scarlet coat, - undoubtedly the portrait of Louise and little Emily. Cornelius himself is there, long-haired, clean-shaven, and handsome in a winter sporting costume.

Or again, we see in "Play-Time, Village School", the log house

with the winter supply of wood piled at the back, the well with the buckets, and the odd chicken at the front door, the small pink sleigh,packed full as usual, stopping for a moment's chat with a neighbour on snow-shoes, while from the little school-house further down the road, a merry crowd of children burst forth with snow-balls and rowdy games.

He painted small Dutch-like pictures of the cheerful interior of the home at Longueuil, and his wife, Louise, figures in many. She was very lovely with beautiful shaped face and dark smooth hair. In a canvas called "Breaking Lent", we see her smiling impishly at the parish priest, and then again at the table eating meat, during Lent. She is always rather well dressed,not like a country girl. With her fine figure she graces her mantillas of imported fabric and her skirts of bright red on green. She receives calls by an amorous villager, and at times is caught by her father or husband flirting with handsome Scottish Army officers.

So the time went merrily on, Cornelius producing canvas after canvas of the habitant farms at Longueuil, but patrons were few and Kreighoff began to feel the need of money. Montreal offered more opportunity and so they sought the large centre. Among the gay young bloods of the day was a certain JOHN BUDDEN, an English auctioneer, a bohemian in his tastes. He soon became a fast friend of the Kreighoffs and saw the possibilities of developing CORNELIUS's talent into something practical for them both. But life in Montreal was not the same as among the friendly folk at Longueuil, and Kreighoff soon realized the lack of interest in his work among the Montreal bourgeois. They might give him a commission to paint portraits of

their English houses and splendid winter outfits on the ice-rinks in front of Montreal, or of the new buildings like the Bank of Montreal on Place d'Armes. But Art, for them, must be imported, like all other goods of the period, a habit which, as far as painting goes, has survived to the present day.

Every year the artist and his little family had to move, and to keep the wolf from the door, Kreighoff was forced to take to sign painting.

Budden realized that he could do something for them and persuaded them to leave Montreal and try their luck down the river at Quebec. Louise was loath to go. Quebec was a long way from Longueuil, where even on the bad days they could slip across the river to a cozy dinner, but Cornelius needed a change and turned readily to new fields. Budden was delighted and received them warmly in his most picturesque little cottage at Mount Pleasant, Upper St.John Street.

No sooner had Kreighoff landed at Quebec with his family than Budden called out, "Now, my dear fellow, let's go to Montmorency Falls, then to Indian Lorette, and Gendron's merry-making, where you will find new and stimulating material, and I shall find you patrons, never fear."

Quebec in those days was a centre of very gay life. The Citadel officers joined hands with the city girls in country frolics, and made the dusky maidens of Indian Lorette their sweethearts. The smart set tumbled into carrioles at night and drove off to Montmorency for 'reveillons'. When the barriers were down the nobility mingled with the common folk, the Governor himself climbed the Sugar Loaf with Jean Baptiste, and coasted on a toboggan at full speed down the steep ice cone to the outlet of the river, half a mile away. From

the summit of the tall cone, a hundred feet high, the glassy sides sloped away in every direction. To the left notches were cut deep into the ice for the revellers to climb in Indian file; behind,the huge cauldron of the cataract boiled and shot up a filmy spray. After hours of good sport the picnic baskets were produced from under the buffalo robes, or, better still, parties went up to the 'Cave', where Gendron, the inn-keeper, served liquors and hot refreshments. He had excavated the sugar-loaf, forming alcoves in a grotto where illumibation made the ice glitter like fairyland. A few were invited to be the guests of Mr. G.B.Hall, who owned the 'Mansion House' above the Falls, the former residence of H.R.H. the Duke of Kent, and part of it still remains exactly as the Prince had left it in 1791. If by chance the marry-makers did not mean to go back to town with the crowd at midnight, they would arrange with Gendron for a 'bal-a-l'huile' at his road-house, a whole night affair, dancers trod lively steps to a fiddler's tune and thirsty fellows began to clink and toss their tumblers.

What a chance for the romantic soul of the artist, and Kreighoff captures the whole character of the scene in his 'Merry-makers'. Here we see over fifty figures, groups of sleighs, carrioles, and horses gathered around the old stone Inn. The figures are a riot of fun and nonsense, elderly women stand gossiping at the foot of the long stairs, a fat man blows a brass horn into the ear of a nervous matron, a toper sits with his head in his hands on the stairs and is teased by a pretty girl who pulls off his red tuque; young men pelt each other with snow-balls, the fiddler and clarionet player reel arm in arm towards the foreground. Blanket-coated figures are climbing into the little red sleighs and behind the dark firs and velvet blue

of the winter night look down in solemn silence on the revellers.

The Painter now enters his most prolific period. He gives us many repetitions of this theme, the ice-racing and the merry crowds on toboggans.

He also went to Indian Lorette and tramped on snow-shoes with Huron guides to Lake St. Charles and on to the Laurentian country.

He has given us some beautiful paintings of Indian life, one very lovely one is called "Indians at a Portage". In a cozy nook among the wooded hills of the Laurentians, an Indian family are sitting around the camp-fire. The chief in a cream-coloured buckskin smokes his pipe contentedly, the little papoose sleeps in his cradle, the squaws and various members of the family gather around the steaming pot. A long pink canoe is pulled up on the shore and the rushing water of the stream turns to a foamy cream. Behind in the distance, hills rise in a series of russets and claret reds, broken by dark blue-green shadows.

Kreighoff depends largely for his interest upon the story-telling quality in his pictures. He drew with careful precision little details of costumes and types.

Canada had to go through a long period before the fuller understanding of selected and simplified form was to come. But what we will always love Kreighoff for are the lovely intimate pictures that he gave us of the simple habitant folk in their snowy landscapes of Quebec, nearly one hundred years ago.

My thanks are due to Mr. Marius Barbeau for his valuable book on the life of KREIGHOFF.

Next week we will continue in the James Wilson Morrice.